45. Public Health. Public health has, on the whole, been satisfactory in Travancore during the last three years, and if the record of deaths maintained in municipal towns, where the registration of vital statistics is compulsory, can be accepted as a correct index, it may be stated that there has been a steady decline in mortality during this period. The State has been practically free from cholera during the period, while the mortality from smallpox has not been heavy. Draft rules have been framed under Regulation VI of 1096 for the compulsory registration of vital statistics in rural areas, but their publication in final form has been delayed for unavoidable reasons. These rules will be shortly issued.

46. Medical Department. There has been a progressive increase during this period in the number of patients treated, operations performed, and labour cases attended to by midwives. The Department of Bacteriology and Pathology, so essential to the diagnosis and treatment of abnormal cases, was started in 1097 under Dr. G. Raman Pillai, and it is proving to be an institution of great benefit to the public. Dr. J. Alexander, the Special Investigation Officer, has completed his investigations into malaria, bowel complaints and elephantiasis; and he is now investigating yaws at Mallappalli. Of the five medical officers recently sent for training to Europe, three have returned. Dr. L. A. Revai Varma has specialised in Ophthalmology and Dr. K. P. Raman Pillai in diseases of the ear, nose and throat, while Miss A. T. Martin has taken, among other degrees, the L. R. C. P. of the Edinburgh University. The remaining two are still undergoing training, one in advanced surgery and the other in bacteriology and public health. Besides the scheme, already brought into force, of giving medical officers in mofussil stations the opportunity of adding to their practical knowledge by working for a period of six months in the General Hospital, a further arrangement has recently been introduced, under which officers below the rank of Deputy Surgeons are posted to the Ophthalmic Hospital by turns with a view to enable them to get some training in the diagnosis and treatment of eye-diseases. It is also in contemplation to bring about a similar arrangement in regard to midwifery cases and diseases affecting the ear, nose and throat. The Dental and X-ray departments in the General Hospital are reported to be unsatisfactory, and schemes are under contemplation for improving their condition. Government have also recently sanctioned the deputation of one of their officers now undergoing training in Europe to study hydrology. The nursing pupils of the first batch who passed out in 1098 have been appointed as nurses with effect from the beginning of the current year, while a second batch is being organised for training. The Darbar Physician has issued a circular directing midwives to visit the homes of expectant mothers within a radius of three miles of their respective hospitals and to render such assistance as may be required by them in the way of advice, instruction and service. A scheme has also been submitted by him for the opening of a midwifery class in the Women and Children's Hospital for training a large number of midwives to take up private practice in out-of-the way places, over and above those trained for service in departmental institutions. The close of the triennium has also been marked by the celebration of the Baby Week in Trivandrum and other important centres in the State. In the hospital for lepers, systematic treatment on up-to-date lines has been introduced with gratifying results. A distribution of lepers according to the stage and progress of the disease is being attempted; and with a view to facilitate this arrangement, the Government have sanctioned the construction of three semi-permanent wards with provision for twelve beds in each. In the hospital for chronic cases, special cottages have been provided for housing and treating cases of yaws and advanced cases of consumption and for the housing of untainted children of leper patients, these children being also taught to read and write. A ward has also been set apart in the District Hospital, Quilon, for the treatment of advanced cases of consumption. Arrangements are being made for the treatment, in Trivandrum, of persons bitten by rabid animals, and when they are completed, it will no longer be necessary for such persons to proceed to Coonoor. The Darbar Physician has published a booklet on the identification of poisonous snakes and the symptoms and treatment of poisonous

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

snake-bite, and before long the necessary therapeutic agents will be distributed to the medical institutions in places where poisonous snakes abound. Much headway has not been made in the provision of labour and lying-in wards and pay wards in mofussil hospitals and it is for the Darbar Physician to persistently press for them until they are actually provided.

47. Ayurveda Department. The overhauling of the grant-in-aid *vaidyasalas* referred to in my last year's Address resulted in the elimination of 9 of them, but 10 new *vaidyasalas* have been added to the list of aided institutions in pursuance of the policy of increasing their total number to 120. The working of the Government Ayurveda Pharmacy at Trivandrum has provoked considerable adverse criticism both in the press and at the last meeting of the Legislative Council, and the question of circumscribing its operations to the requirements of the local Government Ayurveda Hospital is now engaging the attention of the Government. A Pandit Vaidyan has been detailed for publishing rare works on Ayurveda under the supervision of the Curator for the publication of Sanskrit manuscripts. The number of Ayurveda High Schools receiving grant-in-aid from the Government has increased by one in 1099.

48. Excise. Steady efforts have been put forth in recent years to promote the policy of the Excise Department, *viz.*, maximum revenue from minimum consumption, by reducing the number of shops, weakening the issue strength of liquor, and enhancing the still-head duty and tree-tax. The number of arrack shops in the excise area was reduced from 656 in 1096 to 631 in 1098, the quantity of arrack consumed going down from 1,53,159 proof gallons to 1,20,787 proof gallons during the period, which works out at 1·46 drams per head of the population, against 2·4 drams in Mysore, 2·1 drams in Cochin and 1·9 drams in Madras. The strength of arrack was reduced from 20° and 30° U. P. to 25° and 35° U. P. respectively from the beginning of 1097, while the still-head duty on jaggery and toddy arrack, which amounted to Rs. 3-2-0 and Rs. 5-10-0 in 1095, stood at Rs. 3-12-0 and Rs. 6-14-0 respectively in 1098, further increases being in contemplation for the next year. The annual rates of tree-tax have been raised from Rs. 2-8 0 to Rs. 3-8-0 in the case of the palmyrah, from Rs. 5 to Rs. 6 in the case of the cocoanut, and from Rs. 8 to Rs. 10 in the case of the sago palm. With a view to give effect to the policy of the gradual promotion of temperance foreshadowed by me at the eighteenth session of the Assembly and reiterated by the Excise Commissioner in the Legislative Council on behalf of the Government, a scheme was recently formulated by that officer, and a committee composed of officials and non-officials has been constituted to examine that scheme and submit suitable proposals. The report of this committee is awaited. The antiquated farming system in regard to toddy, which still prevails in the taluks of the State bordering on Cochin and which has been the subject of much adverse criticism, will be abolished from the commencement of next year, and the independent shop system with its concomitant of tree-tax will be introduced in those taluks as in the other parts of the State.

49. Education. Reference has already been made in my last year's Address to the appointment of a committee to consider and report on the question of a separate University for Travancore. Our conception of University education has undergone radical transformation since the publication of the report of the Calcutta University Commission, and the need for the establishment of a separate University to serve the needs of the people of this part of Southern India, with their distinctive traditions, genius and ideals, has been precipitated by the changes introduced into the constitution and character of the Madras University by the new University Act. This committee has concluded its sittings, and its report, which is now in process of drafting, is awaited. The vexed question of the admission of a larger number of students in His Highness the Maha Raja's College was considered by the Government at the beginning of the current academic year on receipt of the report of the committee appointed to make proposals in that behalf, and orders were issued for the admission of students in all classes to the maximum limit of the accommodation available. Steps are in progress for imparting instruction in Group III A of the

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly